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Operational activities of the United Nations for international development cooperation: reports of the Executive Boards of the United Nations Development Programme and of the United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Children's Fund and the World Food Programme

Joint report of the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme and the Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund to the Economic and Social Council

Summary

The present report has been prepared in compliance with General Assembly resolution 59/250 of 22 December 2004 on the triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system. In accordance with the request from Member States for greater harmonization and coordination, the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) present, for the first time, a joint report on progress towards implementing resolution 59/250. This report demonstrates the level of cooperation between UNDP and UNFPA in a number of areas mandated by the resolution, both jointly and as part of the United Nations Development Group (UNDG). The first section of the report addresses joint UNDP/UNFPA implementation of resolution 59/250; the following two sections address specific UNDP and UNFPA activities, including resource mobilization. The report concludes with a joint UNDP/UNFPA recommendation.

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I. Joint UNDP/UNFPA implementation of General Assembly resolution 59/250

A. Implementation of the reform programme of the Secretary-General and the provisions of the triennial comprehensive policy review

Capacity development

1. The United Nations Development Group (UNDG) working group on capacity development, in which both the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) participate, is defining a framework that will enable United Nations country teams to engage in structured capacity development for national counterparts. This is essential if developing countries are to achieve the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals. The working group is developing a system-wide matrix; mapping potential niches for the United Nations in country-level capacity-development initiatives; and compiling an inventory of existing capacity-development tools. By mid-2006, the tools will become part of the operational methodologies for use by United Nations country teams.

2. Capacity development is at the core of the UNFPA mandate and is an overarching strategy of its multi-year funding framework (MYFF). The 2004-2007 MYFF identified four interactive programme strategies (advocacy and policy dialogue; building and using a knowledge base; promoting, strengthening and coordinating partnerships; and developing systems for improving performance) that converge to develop the national capacities of programme countries in population-related issues. Many country offices have developed capacity-development initiatives through their regular assistance programmes, often focusing on human resources training.

3. In a number of countries, UNFPA has engaged in sector-wide approaches, particularly in the health sector, where it pools the resources of its programme with those of other development partners. This modality places a premium on national capacity development because it relies heavily on nationally defined outcomes and national ownership. At the corporate level, UNFPA has undertaken a major initiative on reproductive health commodity security, to be implemented initially in 15 countries. Through this initiative, UNFPA supports national efforts to enhance national capacity and systems in logistics, forecasting, procurement and the monitoring of reproductive health commodities.

4. The work of UNDP in capacity development contributes to wider UNDG efforts by helping countries articulate poverty reduction strategies based on the Millennium Development Goals. It also contributes to national and local capacity development strategies that are part of poverty reduction strategies. In decision 2005/26 of 23 June 2005, the UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board approved the use of target for resource assignment from the core (TRAC) 1.1.2 funding to support capacity-building efforts.

5. Within the UNDG, UNDP works in capacity measurement; common approaches to capacity-development strategies and direct budget support; and sector-wide approaches. In Southern and Eastern Africa, UNDP supports national

policies and programmes to improve the management capacity of Governments to enable them to better negotiate, coordinate and manage funding to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, including through direct budget support, sustainable debt management and remittances. These efforts also include independent monitoring and peer-review mechanisms.

Information technology and knowledge sharing

6. UNDP seeks to expand its knowledge networks and communities in order to strengthen the knowledge management dimension of the United Nations by developing and implementing an inter-agency model for knowledge sharing. UNDP has expanded one of its own subthematic networks, the human rights policy network, known as HuriTALK, to serve as the knowledge-sharing and capacity-building tool on mainstreaming human rights in the United Nations system.

7. At the heart of the UNFPA knowledge-sharing strategy are knowledge assets, used to capture, synthesize and share experiential knowledge within the organization. To date, UNFPA has launched 10 knowledge assets on topics of corporate priority, including sector-wide approaches, obstetric fistulas, the quality of sexual and reproductive health care, population and housing censuses, and reproductive health commodity security.

Simplification and harmonization of rules and procedures, transaction costs and efficiency

8. UNDP and UNFPA contribute actively to UNDG efforts to respond to requests from Member States to simplify and harmonize programme and operational procedures. These efforts gained momentum following the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness adopted in March 2005. In July 2005, UNDP and UNFPA, along with their UNDG partners, adopted an action plan to implement the Paris Declaration. The plan addresses the alignment of the work of the United Nations with national development plans; the strengthening of national capacities in a changing aid environment; and increased efforts to strengthen and use national systems.

9. The UNDG programme group, chaired by UNFPA, organized an inter-agency workshop in June 2005 to learn lessons from country offices that had participated in the common programming process and to identify measures to further simplify procedures, while recognizing the need for consultation and accountability. At the request of the UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board, UNDP and UNFPA, in consultation with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the World Food Programme (WFP), presented a report at the annual session 2005 of the Executive Board on measures to simplify the country programme preparation and approval process. In decision 2005/28 of 23 June 2005, the Board requested the Administrator of UNDP and the Executive Director of UNFPA to present a report at the annual session 2006, elaborated jointly with UNICEF, on possible options to further improve and streamline the current harmonized country programme approval procedure.

10. In response to strong calls from Member States, United Nations organizations are ensuring that United Nations country teams are well positioned in a changing aid environment in which sector-wide approaches and budget support arrangements are a growing feature. In February 2005, the UNDG endorsed a common UNDG position on the role of the United Nations in sector support. The UNDG action plan adopted after the Paris High-level Forum will follow up on commitments made on

harmonization and alignment. The plan advises United Nations country teams of their role in the new aid environment and serves as a tool to monitor the UNDG response. The UNDG programme group is developing additional guidance for United Nations country teams. Among other measures, the UNDG agencies will ensure that their rules and regulations are amended, wherever necessary, to allow their full participation in new aid modalities, including budget support.

11. In April 2005, the UNDG launched a cash transfer framework that is consistent with the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and that seeks to reduce transaction costs for national partners. The UNDG has developed a strategy for its roll-out, closely linked to the roll-out of common country programming tools.

12. The UNDG working group on joint programming has established a database of joint programmes based on information provided by country offices and headquarters. The database contains information on approximately 150 joint programmes, over 30 of which began in 2005. Users may search and query joint programme information by country, participating agencies, managing agency, funding modality and theme.

13. The UNDG working group on joint programming also oversees a review of joint programme experiences conducted with a number of countries. By November 2005, 15 countries had agreed to take part, with 18 joint programmes to be reviewed. The reviews are conducted locally in collaboration with United Nations resident coordinator offices and United Nations country teams. They focus on the process of joint programme development and implementation, including efficiency, effectiveness, transaction costs, management and coordination arrangements. A comprehensive report with results from the review will be available in early 2006.

14. UNDP and UNFPA, through the UNDG working group on the joint office model, chaired by UNFPA, continue work on rationalizing the presence of the UNDG Executive Committee agencies in countries where their combined presence is small, and where the representational, staffing and support costs of agencies are often excessive in proportion to their programme budgets.

15. Pursuant to thorough consultations, and following a review by the Executive Boards of UNDP/UNFPA, UNICEF and WFP of the draft common country programme document for Cape Verde, the UNDG Executive Committee agencies will pilot the joint office model in Cape Verde beginning in January 2006. Under the joint office model, individual offices will be unified into a single United Nations office, with a common country programme that encompasses the activities of all participating UNDG Executive Committee agencies. The head of the joint office, who will also serve as the United Nations resident coordinator, will represent participating agencies.

Coherence, effectiveness and relevance of operational activities for development

Common country assessment and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework

16. Recognizing that high-quality national plans and strategies such as poverty reduction strategy papers are key to sustainable development, recent revisions to the guidelines on the common country assessment and the United Nations Development

Assistance Framework (UNDAF) now stipulate that where national processes cover relevant issues, common country assessment exercises may not be necessary. In other countries, common country assessments build on or contribute to ongoing country analytical work, such as that used for poverty reduction strategy papers. In 2005, 33 countries launched common country assessment exercises.

17. To facilitate programmatic coherence, the UNDG Executive Committee agencies requested United Nations country teams to review the timing of their programme cycles and, where necessary, to readjust them to national cycles. The role of the UNDAF as the basis for one coherent United Nations country programme may be strengthened further through the proposal to adopt a single UNDAF and its results matrix in lieu of multiple country programme documents. The UNDG programme group is currently examining this issue and will present a proposal to the UNDG in 2006.

18. To ensure the quality of common country assessments and the UNDAF, the UNDG developed a quality support and assurance system in which UNDP and UNFPA are active partners. Members reviewed the UNDAF documents completed in 2005, prepared 5 UNDAF good practice notes and enumerated 10 lessons from the review. The UNDG forwarded these to United Nations country teams scheduled to begin their UNDAF exercises in September 2005.

Resident coordinator system and United Nations country teams

19. In 2004, the UNDG trained 50 resident coordinators, 35 of whom were new to the resident coordinator function. In 2005, 23 new resident coordinators received training: 7 were female; 11 were from organizations other than UNDP; and 12 were from programme countries. These results reflect the increased attention given to the selection of resident coordinators and the increased awareness of the need for United Nations organizations to work together more effectively.

20. As called for in General Assembly resolution 59/250 of 22 December 2004, the UNDG is developing an accountability framework for resident coordinators, along with systems for mutual resident coordinator and United Nations country team performance appraisal. These reinforce the notion of the resident coordinator as the principal United Nations representative in a country, while recognizing the mandates and representational needs of each member of the United Nations country team. The UNDG is piloting a web-based, reciprocal 180-degree assessment tool for resident coordinators and United Nations country team members as part of an integrated performance appraisal system.

21. The UNDG working group on common premises and services, chaired by UNFPA in 2005, has provided guidance to United Nations country teams and, where appropriate, undertaken missions to launch the common services programme. To facilitate the management of the programme, the UNDG developed a common services management system. In 2005, the efforts of the working group focused on renovating existing United Nations houses and common premises and examining proposals for new ones. Ten of these proposals are at pre-feasibility or feasibility stages. The group also explored possibilities for subnational offices, a number of which were established.

Gender

22. UNDP continued to implement a two-pronged approach to achieve gender equality: mainstreaming gender and promoting women's empowerment. UNDP emphasized the strategic importance of gender mainstreaming in its 2004-2007 MYFF, which identifies the promotion of gender equality as one of the drivers of development effectiveness. By 2010, UNDP senior managers will be held accountable for achieving a 50/50 gender balance at all levels.

23. UNDP has embarked on a major gender mainstreaming capacity-building initiative for UNDP staff in 45 country offices, 4 regional centres and 5 headquarters units, financed through the gender thematic trust fund. The gender mapping exercise, undertaken in all UNDP country offices and in all areas of work, has provided a systematic framework to deepen the analysis and advance gender mainstreaming in all UNDP interventions. It also revealed that over 60 UNDP country offices are working in partnership with the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) to overcome gender gaps. In 2005, following an evaluation of its gender activities, UNDP embarked on a management review of its policies, which will be discussed at the first regular session 2006 of the Executive Board.

24. UNFPA seeks to mainstream gender in all its interventions — a fundamental requirement in dealing with the issues that derive from its mandate. In addition, UNFPA has identified gender equality and the empowerment of women as one of the three goals of its current MYFF. UNFPA advocates the integration of gender issues in broader national development frameworks, such as poverty reduction strategy papers, sector-wide approaches and other national interventions.

25. UNFPA supports data-collection and research activities to create awareness of gender-based violence and works with partners to establish national mechanisms to monitor and reduce gender-based violence. It also advocates the inclusion of gender needs in humanitarian assistance. UNFPA supports culturally sensitive approaches and the development of appropriate programming tools to promote gender equality and human rights within reproductive health programmes. UNFPA is an active partner in the Global Coalition on Women and AIDS and advocates the empowerment of women and girls, and the involvement of men and boys, in efforts to decrease the vulnerability of women and girls to HIV/AIDS.

26. In September 2005, the Inter-Agency Standing Committee, in which UNDP and UNPFA are full members, issued guidelines for interventions on gender-based violence in humanitarian settings, focusing on prevention and the response to sexual violence. The guidelines will facilitate the establishment of a multisectoral coordinated approach to prevent and respond to gender-based violence in emergency settings.

South-South cooperation

27. As indicated in the report of the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation on its fourteenth session[1] and in the reports of the Administrator of UNDP to the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation (SSC/14/2), the United Nations system has increased the use of South-South cooperation, focusing

[1] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixtieth Session, Supplement No. 39* (A/60/39).

on institution-building and networking, information support, resource mobilization and improved management capacities.

28. In January 2005, the Executive Board endorsed the third UNDP cooperation framework for South-South cooperation (2005-2007), which establishes three platforms: (a) support for policy dialogue and follow-up to major intergovernmental conferences, with an emphasis on mainstreaming South-South cooperation as a driver of development effectiveness; (b) the creation of an enabling environment and public-private partnership mechanisms for sustained South-South business collaboration and technology exchanges; and (c) support for stronger South-specific systems to manage and share development knowledge. The UNDP Regional Bureau for the Arab States has sponsored 24 South-South programmes involving 12 countries. The programmes focus on exchanges between Arab and African countries on policy and institutional reform, capacity development and the transfer of technology.

29. UNFPA efforts in South-South cooperation have provided training opportunities in one country for technical staff from another country on issues such as obstetric fistulas, improving access to reproductive health services, and curricula development at tertiary and secondary levels, including the training of subregional teams for reproductive health. UNFPA has emphasized exchanges that incorporate a culturally sensitive approach. These include programmes between Egypt and Indonesia to share experiences on incorporating culturally sensitive reproductive health issues into national programmes.

30. UNFPA also supports efforts to increase cooperation in areas related to its mandate. Kenya, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania are considering harmonizing policies, programmes and strategies for reproductive health within the framework of the East African Community. Thailand has further developed its role in assisting countries of the Greater Mekong Subregion to strengthen their policies and strategies on reproductive health and HIV prevention. UNFPA facilitates an initiative by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Brazil to provide technical expertise on population and reproductive health issues to other developing countries, including assistance to Haiti on sexual violence and to Paraguay on the demographic analysis and management of census information.

Transition from relief to development

31. The UNDG and the World Bank collaborated closely in supporting two post-conflict needs assessment missions in Somalia and the Sudan. The Sudan joint assessment mission was the basis for a Norwegian-led donor conference in April 2005.

32. UNDP has taken steps to provide a set of operational and policy support measures to strengthen and rationalize the transition from relief to development. During the last biennium, UNDP increased threefold its contribution of core resources to the funds allocated to the resident coordinator system. This permitted the creation of a special $2.25 million fund to support countries in transition from relief to development. In 2005, these funds provided some 20 countries with strategic planning and coordination support for recovery and transition. They were also used to support technical missions.

33. The UNFPA rapid response to emergencies includes support for assessment missions, data collection and the immediate shipment of supplies and equipment to enable pregnant women to deliver safely, to treat cases of sexual and gender-based violence, and to prevent HIV transmission. UNFPA supports treatment, rehabilitation, reintegration and counselling for traumatized women and their families in refugee camps and affected areas through projects that address the needs of women and girls in conflict and post-conflict situations. As soon as situations have stabilized, UNFPA lays the groundwork for transition and reconstruction by rehabilitating damaged service-delivery stations; training service providers and community workers; and restoring reproductive health services to promote safe motherhood, adolescent reproductive health and access to condoms.

34. The UNDG worked closely with the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat in supporting the creation of a common United Nations support office for the tsunami recovery phase in Indonesia, Maldives and Sri Lanka. This office, located in Aceh, Indonesia, is under the leadership of the United Nations Recovery Coordinator for Aceh and Nias. In Maldives and Sri Lanka, United Nations country teams have prepared draft transitional strategies outlining United Nations system support to official recovery and reconstruction plans. The process is also under way in Indonesia.

Evaluation of operational activities for development

35. In 2005, UNDP and its associated funds and programmes completed 280 evaluations, conducted in 60 per cent of all programme countries. The total value coverage for UNDP projects and programmes through the outcome evaluations conducted during the 2004 reporting period was estimated at $380 million. UNDP provides quality assurance in evaluations by designing evaluation frameworks and plans in the context of the UNDAF and country programme action plans, while maintaining coverage and quality in the face of increasing demand. UNDP is developing a new system for quality assurance of all mandated evaluations to enhance accountability.

36. UNDP intensified efforts in 2005 to foster learning from evaluation and capacity development. It organized a series of regional workshops to discuss the evaluation function, exchange practices and contribute to an evaluation policy. UNDP also provided evaluation orientation and training to several countries that were initiating development assistance programmes.

37. In 2005, UNFPA conducted its first meta-evaluation, aimed at establishing a baseline for improvements in the quality and consistency of UNFPA-funded evaluations. Initial results indicated that improvements are needed to enable UNFPA to use its evaluation work to design evidence-based strategies to achieve UNFPA strategic goals.

38. UNFPA also reviewed the quality of gender mainstreaming in its materials. The review found that between 1997 and 2005, UNFPA had refined its approach to gender mainstreaming and had produced high-quality materials to guide its field staff in this area. However, gender mainstreaming has not always been consistent over the time period or within the thematic areas that were reviewed. UNFPA is preparing comprehensive recommendations to address this issue.

B. Follow-up to international conferences and the Millennium Development Goals

39. In the context of the five-year review of the United Nations Millennium Declaration,[2] UNFPA focused on highlighting the linkage between the implementation of the agenda of the International Conference on Population and Development and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, particularly in the areas of maternal health, combating HIV/AIDS, child mortality, gender equality and empowerment of women, and poverty eradication. World leaders recognized this close relationship in the 2005 World Summit Outcome by calling for the achievement of universal access to reproductive health by 2015, as set out at the International Conference on Population and Development, and calling on countries to integrate this goal into national development strategies to attain the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration.

40. UNFPA also participated in and supported the 10-year follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing, 1995). UNFPA inputs to the review included co-sponsoring online discussions on women's health; preparing and disseminating advocacy materials outlining the linkages between the Cairo and Beijing agendas; and supporting greater investments in women's health, particularly reproductive health.

41. UNFPA supported and participated in the 10-year follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development (Copenhagen, 1995) and in the High-level Meeting of the General Assembly on HIV/AIDS convened to review the 2005 goals set out in the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS,[3] adopted by the Assembly at its twenty-sixth special session (June, 2001).

42. As coordinator of the Millennium Development Goals within the United Nations system, UNDP has been involved in global, regional and national advocacy activities regarding the Goals. The principal vehicle for implementing the core strategy has been the Millennium Development Goals support programme, financed through the Millennium Trust Fund. Early in 2005, the Millennium Project carried out an ambitious agenda of research and analysis, and produced *Investing in Development: A Practical Plan to Achieve the Millennium Development Goals*.[4] UNFPA participated actively in the work of the Millennium Project through its task forces, particularly those on poverty and maternal health. UNFPA also seconded a senior adviser on sexual and reproductive health to the Millennium Project and provided technical inputs in the area of needs assessments.

43. The Millennium Project initiated country-level advisory work in eight pilot countries in 2004 and assisted United Nations country teams in applying its research and findings. It also contributed to a Millennium Development Goals training module developed by the UNDG. UNDP and the Millennium Project are launching an integrated package of services to support the preparation and implementation of national development strategies based on the Millennium Development Goals.

[2] See General Assembly resolution 55/2.

[3] General Assembly resolution S-26/2, annex.

[4] New York, United Nations Project, 2005. Published by Earthscan, London.

44. As a follow-up to the 2005 World Summit, UNDP and UNFPA, together with their UNDG partners, are preparing a common plan designed to support countries with respect to their adopting, by 2006, and implementing national development strategies to achieve the internationally agreed development goals and objectives, including the Millennium Development Goals.

45. The second component of the Millennium Development Goals support programme involves working with civil society. An example is the Global Call to Action against Poverty, a worldwide campaign led by a coalition of more than 900 civil society organizations from developed and developing countries in support of the Millennium Development Goals. National campaigns have also been organized under the aegis of the global campaign.

46. The increasing number of country reports on implementing the Millennium Development Goals and the dissemination of their findings have played a key role in bringing the Millennium Development Goals to the attention of political leaders and the general public. By March 2005, 93 countries, ranging from high middle-income countries to least developed countries, had produced country reports. Since then, some countries have produced second reports (Albania, Armenia, Bolivia, Cambodia, Lithuania, Mauritius and Senegal), and even third reports (Cameroon and Viet Nam). The quality of the reports continues to improve, with greater emphasis placed on disaggregating national averages by sex, income and age, and on initiating activities at the local level, as in Albania, Cameroon and Honduras.

II. UNDP activities

A. Implementation of the reform programme of the Secretary-General and the provisions of the triennial comprehensive policy review

Funding for operational activities for development of the United Nations system

47. Total UNDP resources reached $4.1 billion in 2004, the highest level ever, up from $3.2 billion in 2003. In 2004, regular resources income increased for the fourth consecutive year, reaching $842 million, up from $634 million in 2000. Ten members of the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) increased their core contributions in local currency terms to UNDP regular resources; three did so by more than 10 per cent. This level of contributions is consistent with the objectives set forth in the UNDP 2004-2007 MYFF and represents an encouraging trend towards achieving the overall target of $1.1 billion by 2007.

48. It also signals renewed support from Member States for a United Nations development arm that benefits from adequate and predictable funding. While regular resources income remained volatile with respect to exchange-rate fluctuations — more than one third of the increase in resources available in 2004 was attributable to local currency appreciation vis-à-vis the United States dollar — adherence to multi-year funding mechanisms is expected to enhance income predictability.

49. Non-core resources also experienced steady growth. In 2004, third party co-financing by bilateral donors and multilateral organizations reached $1.7 billion, up

from $1.1 billion in 2003. Local resources channelled through UNDP by programme countries in support of their own development priorities rose by 20 per cent to $1.2 billion. In the presence of expanding aid mechanisms available to programme countries, these contributions signal confidence in UNDP and in its capacity and effectiveness.

Crisis prevention and recovery

50. Recognizing the key role of communities in sustaining several types of post-conflict assistance, UNDP launched an integrated community development programme in Burundi and a similar initiative, the Srebrenica regional recovery programme, in Bosnia and Herzegovina. UNDP collaborates with the Government of Uganda in supporting a transition and recovery programme for northern Uganda designed to reintegrate internally displaced persons.

51. UNDP has provided assistance for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration efforts during the last two years. Its rapid response mechanism has allowed UNDP to provide prompt support for ex-combatants in locations such as Ituri, Democratic Republic of the Congo. UNDP has worked with United Nations partners in developing joint programmes for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration in Haiti and the Sudan.

52. *Sustaining peace in post-conflict situations.* In 2005, UNDP and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations of the United Nations Secretariat developed an innovative, integrated United Nations presence for Sierra Leone — the United Nations Integrated Office in Sierra Leone — that will replace the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone in January 2006. Created by the Security Council on 31 August 2005 (resolution 1620 (2005)), the United Nations Integrated Office in Sierra Leone will be headed by an executive representative of the Secretary-General who will also serve as resident representative of UNDP and United Nations resident coordinator.

53. In Haiti, Kosovo, Liberia, Sierra Leone and the Sudan, UNDP has supported the reform and rebuilding of the justice and security sectors, and has emphasized developing the capacity of national and local institutions to work with civic, traditional and community leaders. UNDP provided technical and logistic support to the truth and reconciliation commissions in Sierra Leone and Timor-Leste, and to the Special Court for Sierra Leone. It also supports rebuilding and reconciliation efforts at the community level in Côte d'Ivoire.

54. *Building national capacities for conflict prevention.* UNDP supports, in collaboration with several United Nations partners, a programme designed to build national capacity to prevent conflicts. This programme has assisted Governments and national stakeholders in building their capacity to peacefully settle disputes.

55. Mindful that illicit flows of small arms and light weapons can be persistent threats to peace and security in many developing countries, UNDP has supported the efforts of 80 countries in implementing the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects.[5] Among these countries were Costa Rica, Ghana, Kenya, Peru, Serbia and Montenegro and Uganda.

[5] See *Report of the United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, New York, 9-20 July 2001* (A/CONF.192/15), para. 24.

56. Over the past two years, UNDP has assisted Mauritania, Senegal and Uganda in establishing national mine action programmes. In addition, in collaboration with other United Nations organizations, UNDP has helped to establish a completion initiative to resolve, over a three- to four-year period, landmine issues in various countries. UNDP promotes South-South cooperation through the mine action exchange programme. UNDP also helped to launch a forum of mine-affected countries that enables them to have a collective voice in the international arena.

57. *Building national capacities for disaster response and prevention.* Given the degree to which natural disasters have disrupted development efforts, UNDP intensified its efforts in 2005 to build national capacity for natural disaster prevention, preparedness and recovery, drawing on lessons from the Asian tsunami and other natural disasters.

B. Cooperation with the Bretton Woods institutions

58. UNDP continues its close cooperation with the Bretton Woods institutions. The chief economists of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) participated in the United Nations experts group that advised the Millennium Project. The most noteworthy feature of this dialogue was a series of technical workshops that helped to advance a common methodological approach to needs assessments for achieving the Millennium Development Goals. The experts also reached agreement on a common approach to assessing needs in the health sector. Discussions with senior IMF staff focused on designing macroeconomic frameworks consistent with achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

59. In 2004, in recognition of their growing partnership, UNDP and the World Bank signed a memorandum of understanding on financial management regarding grant agreements. In the fourth quarter of 2005, the Administrator of UNDP participated, for the first time, in the meetings of the Development Committee. This cooperation helped to unify the development community around the Millennium Development Goals, recognizing: (a) the need to scale up investments; (b) the increasing relevance of poverty reduction strategies based on the Millennium Development Goals; and (c) the need for extensive collaboration with the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat and the UNDG on statistics and statistical capacity-building to monitor the Millennium Development Goals.

III. UNFPA activities

A. Implementation of the reform programme of the Secretary-General and the provisions of the triennial comprehensive policy review

Funding for operational activities for development of the United Nations system

60. In 2005, regular resources were expected to exceed $350 million for the first time in the history of UNFPA. As of 1 October 2005, 135 countries had contributed nearly $348.7 million to regular resources. They include Australia, Austria,

Belgium, Canada, China, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, India, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Pakistan, the Republic of Korea, the Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

61. The growth has been due primarily to increased contributions from 11 donors (Australia, Canada, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Luxembourg, New Zealand, Norway, Sweden and Switzerland) and the favourable exchange rate of the euro and other currencies against the United States dollar. In 2004, 166 donor countries made pledges to UNFPA; the same range of donors is expected for 2005. The large number of Governments contributing to UNFPA demonstrates their confidence in the work of the Fund.

62. Income in 2004 to other resources was provided through co-financing arrangements ($131.1 million) and other arrangements ($43.4 million). Other resources included co-financing (trust funds, thematic trust funds, cost-sharing and other funds); the junior professional officers programme; and procurement services. UNFPA received 49 multi-year pledges in 2004, up from 20 in 2003. As of 1 October 2005, UNFPA had received 47 multi-year pledges. The increase in contributions to regular resources will enable UNFPA to allocate its resources to priority countries in areas such as reproductive health, gender equity and women's empowerment, and in programmes to improve maternal health and combat HIV/AIDS.

Country-level capacity of the United Nations system and regional support

63. As part of overall United Nations reform efforts, UNFPA is focusing on a stronger field presence to make development assistance more effective in line with the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the triennial comprehensive policy review. UNFPA has strengthened its country offices, especially in Africa, enabling them to better assist in national capacity-building and to support programmes that respond to national priorities. UNFPA has established operations manager posts to oversee financial, human resources and logistic operations at the country level. UNFPA has also trained staff in key programme areas.

64. In response to country needs and in an effort to achieve better results in line with its strategic direction and United Nations reform, UNFPA is focusing on strengthening its regional presence and is moving towards the regionalization of some of its organizational units. This process offers an opportunity to further strengthen the capacity of country offices to support the needs of programme countries. The UNFPA Technical Advisory Programme continues to support capacity-building at country and regional levels and has been instrumental in supporting country office implementation of United Nations reform processes.

B. Strategic partnerships, including cooperation with the World Bank

65. Since 2003, the World Bank and UNFPA have collaborated within the framework of a joint action plan. The World Bank and UNFPA focal points worked closely to mainstream reproductive health within the agenda of the Millennium Development Goals, highlighting the linkages between the goals of the International

Conference on Population and Development and the Millennium Development Goals.

66. In the context of its global campaign to end fistula, launched in 2003, UNFPA developed innovative partnerships with the private sector, including with Virgin Unite, the charitable arm of the Virgin Group of companies, and with Rainey Kelly Campbell and Roalfe/Young and Rubicam, a leading advertising agency. In February 2005, Virgin Unite and UNFPA, along with several other partners, collaborated in organizing a "fistula fortnight" — a two-week fistula advocacy, training and treatment event in Nigeria. Virgin Unite and Rainey Kelly Campbell and Roalfe/Young and Rubicam also provided in kind support for advocacy activities in Europe and northern Nigeria.

67. The United Nations Foundation, a strategic partner for UNFPA, has been instrumental in supporting the development of innovative approaches to improve the lives of adolescent girls and the quality of their sexual and reproductive health. The Foundation has also partnered with other organizations, such as the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation and Nike, to support UNFPA work in advocacy and on child marriage.

68. UNFPA collaborates closely with the World Health Organization (WHO) within the framework of the WHO-UNFPA strategic partnerships programme, aimed at improving sexual and reproductive health through the adoption of evidence-based guidelines that are updated regularly to reflect international scientific consensus. UNFPA and WHO conducted a number of regional workshops in 2005 and produced region-specific proposals.

IV. Joint UNDP/UNFPA recommendation

69. **The Executive Board may wish to take note of this report (E/2006/5-DP/2006/12-DP/FPA/2006/2), and transmit it to the Economic and Social Council, together with the comments and guidance provided by delegations at the present session.**

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Operational activities of the United Nations for international development cooperation: reports of the Executive Boards of the United Nations Development Programme/United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Children's Fund and the World Food Programme

United Nations Children's Fund
Executive Board
First regular session 2006
16-20 and 23 January 2006
Item 3 of the provisional agenda**

Report of the Executive Director of the United Nations Children's Fund

Annual report to the Economic and Social Council***

Summary

The present report, which is prepared annually, covers a range of issues arising from the decisions of the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly, and provides the perspective of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) on these topics of system-wide interest. It describes UNICEF actions to contribute to the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals and to respond to the outcome of the 2005 World Summit. It provides information about the direction UNICEF is taking to work in closer partnership with other members of the United Nations system to ensure that development assistance produces sustainable results for children.

This report, together with an addendum containing the comments made by the members of the Executive Board during its first regular session of 2006, will be submitted to the Economic and Social Council for consideration at its substantive session of 2006.

* E/2006/100 (to be issued).
** E/ICEF/2006/1.
*** This document was submitted late because of internal consultations.

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I. Introduction

1. For nearly 60 years, UNICEF has stood as a beacon of hope for the world's children. Over time, its missions and programmes have evolved – from the recovery in the wake of the Second World War to the end of the Cold War to the dawn of the twenty-first century.

2. Today, new opportunities and challenges – especially the 2015 target to achieve the Millennium Development Goals – require creative thinking, innovative approaches and additional efficiencies. They also demand a willingness to question previously held assumptions, all with the goal of producing quantifiable results in the best interests of children.

3. The past year has been a time of trials and transitions for UNICEF: humanitarian crises of unparalleled scope and tragedy, an emerging consensus around global health issues and a new Executive Director. UNICEF is rising to the most pressing needs of children through new partnerships, such as the global campaign, "Unite for Children, Unite Against AIDS", and the Partnership for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health; through a renewed commitment to integrated approaches to the delivery of proven health interventions and strategies; and through a collective dedication to accountability and a mandate to yield measurable results.

II. Implementation of the reform programme of the Secretary-General and the provisions of the triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system

A. Structures and mechanisms

4. Reaching the Millennium Development Goals requires close working relationships among United Nations agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and donor and programme countries. The United Nations Development Group (UNDG) continued to make progress through information exchanges and by establishing broad parameters of agreement. However, it continues to be the much more focused Executive Committee – composed of four agencies with more similar approaches to programme delivery (the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), UNICEF and the World Food Programme (WFP) – where the major progress is made. UNICEF continues to be proactive in the UNDG and to support more intensive collaboration in the spirit of United Nations reform and the 2005 World Summit, in order to achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

5. UNICEF continues to strengthen partnerships, both at the level of senior leadership and in programme collaboration in the field. The new Executive Director's first official field mission – undertaken jointly with the Executive Directors of WFP and the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) – was to areas in Southern Africa that suffer from the triple threats of HIV/AIDS, hunger and weak governance. This trip reinforced the importance of programmatic ties and regional leadership. In September 2005, building on the presence of world leaders at the World Summit, UNICEF helped to launch a new Partnership for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health. In the education sector, UNICEF is the lead agency and secretariat for the United Nations Girls' Education

Initiative (UNGEI) which brings together United Nations agencies, the World Bank, donors and NGOs to support country-level efforts to influence decision-making and investments in national education policies, plans and programmes. In October 2005, UNICEF, along with UNAIDS, launched the "Unite for Children, Unite Against AIDS" campaign, which focuses on children as the missing face of the AIDS pandemic.

6. A major source of guidance for the work of the UNDG is the triennial comprehensive policy review (TCPR) adopted by the General Assembly in resolution 59/250 of 22 December 2004. The TCPR identified changes needed to increase efficiency by reducing transaction costs, and increase coherence, effectiveness and relevance through the programme process, the resident coordinator system, evaluation and attention to gender issues. A three-year programme of work has been prepared to respond to the resolution, and the first annual report was made to the Economic and Social Council (E/2005/CRP.1) at its substantive session of 2005. Additionally, the UNDG has developed an action plan on follow-up to the agreements made at the Paris High-Level Forum, as well as an action plan on the Millennium Declaration and Development Goals as a key part of its follow-up to the 2005 World Summit.

7. Because the Millennium Development Goals are largely focused on women and children, UNICEF is intensifying its work and partnerships to achieve them, particularly Goals 2 (universal primary education), 4 (reducing child mortality), 5 (improving maternal health) and 6 (HIV/AIDS and other diseases), as well as ensuring that the needs of children remain at the forefront of work for all of the other Goals, including eradicating extreme poverty and hunger, achieving gender equality and addressing water and sanitation.

B. Funding for operational activities for development of the United Nations system

8. The sixth pledging event in the context of the multi-year funding framework took place in January 2005. Details were provided in the Executive Director's annual report to the Executive Board, presented at the annual session of 2005 (E/ICEF/2005/6).

9. For the current year, as of 30 September 2005, UNICEF had recorded regular resources income of $460.8 million from government donors and intergovernmental agencies against medium-term financial plan projections of $455 million. Total regular resources income from all sources for 2005 is projected to be $815 million, with the level of government regular resources contributions in line with financial plan estimates. Other resources contributions from Governments were $739 million, of which $326 million were for other resources-regular against a planned target of $470 million, and $413 million were for other resources-emergency against a planned target of $380 million. Total other resources income from all sources was $1.36 billion against the planned target of $1.49 billion.

10. There was a continued positive trend in regular resources levels in 2005, as well as in other resources, due to the unprecedented response from donors (private sectors and Governments) to the tsunami disaster and other emergencies.

11. UNICEF depends on core resources to carry out its commitments to achieving the Millennium Development Goals, and to maintain readiness and strengthen capacities to respond to emergencies. UNICEF encourages Member States to increase their annual voluntary contributions to core resources and, for those in a position to do so, to provide multi-year commitments and payment schedules at the pledging event held at the first regular session of the Executive Board.

12. UNICEF highly appreciates the support of many donors that have provided thematic contributions which, like regular resources, allow for longer-term planning and sustainability. Over $600 million in thematic funding has been received since 2003. More information on thematic funding in the context of the medium-term strategic plan (MTSP) will be presented to the Executive Board at the first regular session of 2006 (E/ICEF/2006/9).

C. Capacity-building

13. General Assembly resolution 59/250 on the TCPR, the Paris Declaration and the outcome document of the 2005 World Summit call for greater support to developing countries in establishing national institutions and for the implementation of strategies for capacity-building. In line with this, the UNICEF MTSP for 2006-2009 (E/ICEF/2005/11) establishes "continued support for building national capacities to fulfill children's rights, with increased emphasis on strengthening policy frameworks, service delivery and protection systems and institutions" as one of the key strategies for UNICEF work.

14. Capacity-building is a critical element of programmes for achieving the Millennium Development Goals and to sustain their achievement once they are met. UNICEF contributes to capacity-building at the national level by facilitating better national planning to take into account the interests of children, supporting data collection and analysis systems that will make information available about the situation of children, and analyzing these data to make apparent the programme directions that will improve the lives of children. UNICEF also supports capacity-building at the local level to promote improved resources to work for children.

15. A cornerstone of UNICEF support for capacity-building is development planning that takes into account the needs of children. By 2005, at least 41 countries had completed national plans of action for children since the General Assembly special session on children (2002) and an additional 45 plans for children were under formulation, many with UNICEF support. UNICEF is working to ensure that countries incorporate the goals and commitments of "A world fit for children" into their follow up to the 2005 World Summit, reflecting the Millennium Development Goals; and into other national policy and planning instruments, such as poverty reduction strategies (PRSs), national development plans and sector-wide approaches. An estimated 145 countries have used one or more of these instruments for their follow-up activities. Many countries are also reviewing relevant national legislation in order to achieve greater consistency with the Convention on the Rights of the Child. It is critical that such plans focus on support for achievement of the Goals.

16. UNICEF encourages the involvement of children and young people in the preparation of national plans of action for children and sectoral plans on child-related issues. Children and young people played substantial roles in the preparation of most national plans of action for children prepared in 2004, but could be much more active in the preparation of PRSs.

17. Empowering civil society to mobilize and work with public sector authorities, and contributing to reform of national laws and policies on children's rights, continue to be critical strategies for capacity-building. One specific way that UNICEF supports this kind of capacity-building is by addressing violence against children, especially girls, and women through research and advocacy; legislative reform; counseling and rehabilitation services; training and awareness-raising among police, judges and other officials to ensure the proper enforcement of existing laws; and ensuring services for survivors.

18. Reliable, age-specific and disaggregated data are essential for effective planning and monitoring for PRSs and the Millennium Development Goals. *DevInfo* is an important source of data on social indicators and it has now been adopted by the UNDG to monitor and report on progress towards the Goals. Its technology has been specifically designed to support Governments in this monitoring work, and it can also be adapted to include additional user-defined indicators linked to national monitoring frameworks such as PRSs. By serving as a common repository, *DevInfo* can add value to national statistics systems by complementing existing databases and bridging data dissemination gaps. The system is available without charge to Member States and United Nations agencies, and United Nations country teams (UNCTs) can support its implementation in over 80 countries. The development, implementation and use of *DevInfo* will continue as an inter-agency project, led by UNICEF.

19. In line with commitments of the Paris Declaration, UNICEF supports the building of national capacities at the sectoral level. This includes support for better information systems in the areas of health and education, including for micro-planning to generate more accurate data for immunization and for tracking enrolment and retention rates in schools. As it is critically important to know how health and education services are used according to gender, so that disparities can be identified and narrowed, UNICEF supports improved collection of gender-disaggregated data including through its multiple indicator cluster surveys (MICS). UNICEF has also developed new indicators in the area of protection, for example for female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C), and child marriage.

20. In the health sector, UNICEF, in partnership with the World Bank and the World Health Organization (WHO), has developed a prioritization method called marginal budgeting for bottlenecks (MBB) that first identifies implementation cost restraints in the health system and then estimates the marginal costs of overcoming these constraints. MBB thus facilitates a process of budgeting for government medium-term national or regional health expenditures that starts by improving allocation efficiency of newly available resources, and provides a basis for policy dialogue and planning that creates results for achieving the Millennium Development Goals. This is now being used in several countries in Asia and Africa, and UNICEF is in discussion on ways of using MBB in country- and district-level planning for scaling up malaria programmes in Africa.

D. The resident coordinator system

21. The UNDG Executive Committee has agreed on ways of strengthening the role of resident coordinators, including giving them both authority over the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) results matrix, and responsibility for reporting on achievement of those results. In 2005, the Regional Directors of the four member agencies of the UNDG Executive Committee and of several specialized agencies provided inputs to the process used by UNDP on behalf of the Secretary-General for assessing candidates for resident coordinator positions. Similarly, in performance assessments, the UNICEF Regional Directors have placed greater importance on contributions that UNICEF Representatives made to the work of the UNCT.

22. A total of 11 UNICEF staff have served as Resident Coordinators. Two UNICEF staff have become Deputy Special Representatives of the Secretary-General, which includes coordination responsibilities. The Executive Director is encouraging more UNICEF staff to serve as Resident Coordinators. This will benefit UNICEF by facilitating stronger partnerships among UNICEF and other parts of the United Nations system while helping to better integrate work on behalf of children. It will also enrich other parts of the system with the expertise and experience of UNICEF staff.

23. At country level, UNICEF staff continue to be very active in UNCT theme groups. The theme groups on HIV/AIDS have been the most successful and UNICEF often takes a leadership role in them. These and other theme groups provide an opportunity for a stronger advocacy voice of the United Nations and they serve an especially important role where there are no other donor forums.

24. During 2005, UNICEF continued to pursue active partnerships in post-crisis transition both at headquarters and in the field. In Sierra Leone, UNICEF is working with its United Nations partners to further shape an Integrated Office, which will be established as of 1 January 2006 after the ending of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone. UNICEF has offered to act as the lead agency for the subnational integrated United Nations offices in two districts. In Somalia, UNICEF seconded a senior staff member to act on behalf of UNDG as the Senior Coordinator for the Joint Needs Assessment, and in Liberia UNICEF continued to lead the social services cluster, in close collaboration with the Liberian government authorities.

25. UNICEF continues its ongoing engagement in the UNDG Working Group on Transition Issues. Following the report of the Executive Committee on Humanitarian Affairs on integrated missions, UNICEF participated in the inter-agency review of the integrated mission planning process to help further improve the effectiveness of the United Nations system to assist countries with the transition to peace. Likewise, UNICEF actively contributed to the strategic discussions on the establishment of the peacebuilding support office and Standing Peacebuilding Fund requested by the 2005 World Summit.

26. On behalf of UNDG, UNICEF has been asked to co-manage, with the United States Agency for International Development, the work-stream for social service delivery of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)/Development Assistance Committee (DAC) Fragile States Group, in which it also leads the education sector. Other partners in this initiative

include the World Bank, WHO, the United Kingdom Department for International Development and other OECD/DAC members.

E. Common country programming

27. By the end of 2006, all countries, except those in crisis, are expected to have introduced the common country programming process. This process places the assistance provided by the United Nations system in the context of the Millennium Development Goals and national plans to achieve them, and provides a framework for collaboration among agencies, including joint programmes, and for a review of progress towards the Goals. UNICEF continues to be involved in training and technical support for countries implementing the new processes which are facilitated by the United Nations Development Group Office (UNDGO), in conjunction with the United Nations System Staff College.

28. UNICEF regional offices and the bureaux of the other UNDG agencies have increasingly taken a lead in the oversight and technical support functions. All UNICEF regional offices are major contributors to the support and oversight for common country programming and UNICEF has acted as lead agency in several regions. Regional teams have made major progress during 2005 in improving the quality and usefulness of their oversight, providing useful input to the UNDG Quality Support and Assurance Reference Group, which has produced "best practices" of Common Country Assessments and UNDAFs for use by other country teams.

29. The early achievements in establishing joint programmes as a part of the common country programme process have been sustained, although country teams are still adjusting to the new guidelines. So far, according to UNICEF country office annual reports for 2004, UNICEF is a partner in 86 joint programmes with project expenditures of $134 million, of which UNICEF expenditures were $60 million (predominantly other resources, at $51 million). As UNCTs improve their joint planning and strengthen their partnerships to focus on achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, it is likely that the throughput in joint programmes will increase.

30. Drawing from lessons learned in implementing the common country programme process over the last four years, a working group has been established under the UNDG Programme Group to explore ways to simplify this process so that it can be more readily supportive of and used in conjunction with national planning processes. UNICEF actively participates in a working group to develop proposals for a simplified programming process, with recommendations expected by the end of 2005.

31. One major area of focus in 2005 was support to the first joint office model in Cape Verde. The country team in Cape Verde prepared the first ever common country programme document, which was approved by the Executive Boards of UNDP/UNFPA, UNICEF and WFP in 2005. Under the common country programme, which begins on 1 January 2006, there will be one Representative and one office for all four agencies. The approach helped the United Nations system agencies to find new ways of working together more closely, and the lessons learned will be applied to future joint work. The four agencies are working to identify a second country in which to establish another joint office.

32. New cash transfer procedures are being introduced which are a major, simplifying change for UNICEF and its partners. UNICEF will no longer depend on receipts for activities, submitted by partners, to verify activities. Instead, partners will supply certificates of expenditure which will be supported by field monitoring, spot-checks and audits. All four Executive Committee agencies will now use the same procedures, easing the burden on development partners. In addition, UNICEF staff will be able to devote more time to field monitoring and to support partners in building their financial management capacities, a key element of the Paris Declaration.

33. UNICEF has continued to be a resource to the UNDG on the human rights-based approach to programming, working with UNFPA in sub-Saharan Africa to prepare a joint training-of-trainers programme for country teams. UNICEF has provided individuals to train country teams in all regions of the world.

F. Common premises and services

34. UNICEF supports the establishment of common premises wherever security permits, and where they are cost-effective. Since the attack on the United Nations in Baghdad, new United Nations premises are subject to a security review on co-locating all personnel, and further progress will take into account local concerns ranging from a lack of suitable buildings to safety in earthquakes.

35. The adoption of common services among agencies at the country level is accelerating. There are now two full-time and four part-time team leaders (one full-time and three part-time staff members from UNICEF) who are supporting country teams to establish – and monitor the ensuing savings from – common services. Since its global roll-out in November 2004, the common services programme has intervened in 44 of 130 targeted countries. Implementation in a further eight countries in six regions planned for the end of 2005 has been postponed to 2006, subject to funding availability and results acquired from the Common Services Management System.

36. As common services develop, they increasingly move beyond such "traditional" in-house services as pouch and mail service, security and travel to include more direct support to country programmes such as common field outposts and offices and shared missions, transport and logistics, especially for offices in emergency situations. This kind of common service is of great interest to UNICEF for the efficiency gains in reaching more remote areas, and in supporting suboffices and out-posted staff.

37. The Common Services Management System is a result-tracking and management system developed specifically for inter-agency common services arrangements, enabling country teams, regional teams, Regional Director teams, UNDGO and the UNDG Management Group to monitor individual country common services arrangements, using both quantitative and qualitative indicators. The first version is being piloted in four countries, in three of which UNICEF plays a leading role in the Operations Management Team.

38. UNICEF is examining ways of ensuring that its systems are able to receive funds from other partner organizations and to disburse funds to them, which will enable UNICEF to lead common services or joint operational arrangements within a country office. The inter-agency Common Services Working Group is also exploring the kind of support needed for the implementation of the joint office initiative.

G. Monitoring and evaluation

39. UNICEF continues to actively participate in the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG). In 2005, the group agreed on and published a set of norms and standards for evaluation work by United Nations agencies. These norms and standards are now being applied in self-assessments of each agency's evaluation activities. UNICEF has completed its own evaluation, showing compliance with the norms and standards. The next step is for evaluation departments based in donor agencies to perform peer reviews. UNDP has already completed this process and it is underway for UNICEF. These assessment activities are guided by the UNEG task force on Quality stamp for Evaluation.

40. UNICEF is co-chair of the UNEG task force on Evaluation Capacity Development. UNICEF contributes to this process by sharing and diversifying its experience in fostering national and regional evaluation associations in most parts of the world. UNICEF is also working closely with the UNEG to ensure that regional and country office staff are equipped to support national evaluative efforts.

41. UNICEF also participates in the task force on Country-level Evaluation. These evaluations include evaluations of UNDAFs, as the first UNDAFs near the end of their implementation cycle; evaluation of normative activities, one of the acknowledged strengths of the United Nations system; and evaluation of United Nations contributions in situations of transition from humanitarian crisis to development. The strength of this process lies in its inter-agency nature, and the evaluation of each agency within the context of United Nations system activities. These evaluations are expected to feed into the TCPRs scheduled for 2007 and 2010.

H. Gender mainstreaming

42. Gender equality is one of the Millennium Development Goals, and an essential strategy for reaching the other Goals. To this end, UNICEF continues to mainstream a gender perspective in its work as part of the human rights-based approach to programming. UNICEF, in partnership with other United Nations agencies, is developing and reinforcing its capacity to advance the rights of women and children through laws, policies and budgets, at national, regional and global levels.

43. UNICEF and the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) will lead a desk review and field studies of the latest generation of UNDAFs and their guidelines, which will result in new tools and better coordination so that country programming takes sufficient account of gender concerns. This is being done as part of the UNDG Task Force on Gender Equality.

44. UNICEF is working to promote the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women through comprehensive, holistic and participatory legislative reforms. Such support includes legislation, implementation mechanisms, social policies and budgetary allocations. The latest output from this initiative is a compilation of inter-country studies analyzing how legislative reform to harmonize laws with the Convention on the Rights of the Child has progressed in the four legal traditions (civil law, common law and countries with mixed legal traditions with Sharia and/or customary law systems).

45. The UNICEF multisectoral approach to education, which combines education, with programmes to improve water and sanitation, child protection, early childhood care and nutrition, as appropriate, has enormous benefits for girls and women. For example, the installation of water points can reduce women's and children's (especially girls') work collecting water. Such programmes contribute to higher primary-school enrolment and completion rates, and to the retention of female teachers.

46. UNICEF recognizes the centrality of integrated programmes to support a continuum of care for mothers and their children. The new UNICEF-supported Partnership for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health takes a comprehensive approach to maternal and child survival by helping to provide for the healthiest possible start in life. The goals of the "Unite for Children, Unite Against AIDS" campaign support a range of child-centred approaches to combating the AIDS pandemic, including primary prevention and education, paediatric AIDS treatment and services to prevent mother-to-child transmission of HIV. Other programmes, such as promotion of breastfeeding, help to promote critical Millennial Goals such as reducing child mortality, along with improved nutrition and reducing hunger.

47. UNICEF is developing a non-coercive and non-judgmental approach to FGM/C and child marriage, based on human rights principles including the empowerment of girls and women. UNICEF, along with the International Labour Organization (ILO), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCHR) and WHO, supports the Secretary General's study on violence against children for which UNICEF is coordinating the preparation of the chapter on violence in schools.

48. In emergencies, UNICEF support takes account of gender concerns. Activities include providing immediate health care; facilitating access to legal assistance; providing special protection to women and girls in camps for refugees and internally displaced persons; raising community awareness about children's rights to be protected from violence, abuse and exploitation; and providing psychosocial support and vocational training opportunities. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, UNICEF, UNFPA and other partners are implementing a multisectoral project for more than 10,000 women and girls. This project includes training for health-care practitioners and local women's organizations, support for hospitals that treat rape victims by providing medical and surgical care, and voluntary and confidential post-rape counselling and treatment for sexually transmitted infections. Gender sensitization is also being provided to police, lawyers, magistrates and medical personnel involved in interviewing, collecting and documenting legal and medical evidence.

49. UNICEF has joined with the Organization of the Islamic Conference and the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization to prepare a report on *Investing in the Children of the Islamic World*. The report paid specific attention to children's rights in general, and girls in particular, with openness to Islamic culture, while protecting such rights as education for boys and girls and protection against child marriage and FGM/C.

50. The further development of organizational strategies to systematically integrate gender into UNICEF work will include collecting information and case studies on good practices. UNICEF will also conduct an organization-wide evaluation to assess implementation of the policy on gender equality and women's rights adopted by the Executive Board in 1994 (E/ICEF/1994/L.5 and Add.1), and of pertinent resolutions of the General Assembly and Economic and Social Council.

51. UNICEF is taking measures to improve gender advocacy in country programmes by strengthening gender awareness among its staff. A gender perspective is being added to training manuals on programme processes, and specific attention is being given to the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women in the core course on the human rights-based approach to programming. UNICEF has also designed a checklist on including gender equality as a core issue in UNICEF programmes. This tool has been integrated into a learning package on the approach that is being prepared under the leadership of UNHCHR.

I. Collaboration with the World Bank

52. Both UNICEF and the World Bank have new leadership, and both institutions are committed to increased and strengthened collaboration focused on rapid achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. Building on experience to date, this collaboration centres around two main areas: (a) programmatic and policy work, where each organization jointly contributes to the development of programmes and policies, with greater efforts to synchronize and coordinate the design of programmes supported by both, especially in the areas of HIV/AIDS, education and health; and (b) streamlined and more focused funding relationships.

Programme collaboration

53. In the area of HIV/AIDS, UNICEF has contributed to the work of the World Bank and UNDP, initiated in response to the Global Task Team on Improving AIDS Coordination among Multilateral Institutions and International Donors, to integrate HIV/AIDS programming into PRSs. In particular, UNICEF is contributing capacity-building assistance to ensure that PRSs both address the issues of children affected by HIV/AIDS and incorporate national action plans for orphans and vulnerable children. UNICEF also made substantive contributions to a review of legal protection for children orphaned by HIV/AIDS, developed by the World Bank, which will help to improve and enforce the use of legal instruments to protect the rights of children affected by HIV/AIDS. These developments are being introduced in several countries on a pilot basis. The World Bank is a key partner with UNICEF in the "Unite for Children, Unite Against AIDS" campaign.

54. UNICEF and the World Bank collaborated to better link UNGEI (where UNICEF is a designated lead agency) with the Education For All Fast-Track Initiative (where the World Bank takes a lead role). Joint work to promote equitable distribution of an essential learning package in countries with low enrolment rates was extended to 10 countries in West and Central Africa, after a trial phase in Burkina Faso. UNICEF and the World Bank embarked on initiatives to support abolition of school fees and other charges in selected countries, following a recommendation of the 2004 Global Partners Forum on Orphans and Vulnerable Children, co-hosted by the World Bank and UNICEF. These initiatives will build on the lessons learned in countries that have successfully implemented a free education policy. Other collaborations include a situation analysis of the global status of user fees, a state-of-the-art paper on lessons learned from the abolition of school fees, and a practitioner sourcebook of the practical experience based on experience in Kenya, Malawi, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania.

55. In the area of child protection, UNICEF and the World Bank continue to work together in targeted programming, particularly on programmes for demobilization and reintegration of child soldiers, for example in the Greater Great Lakes region and in Burundi. Donors have supported UNICEF work in this area through a multi-donor trust fund operated by the World Bank.

56. Multi-donor trust funds are increasingly used as a funding modality to channel financial resources to agreed reconstruction and rehabilitation priorities for countries in transition, frequently following a post-crisis joint needs assessment by the United Nations and the World Bank on behalf of national counterparts. For example, several large-scale programme proposals are under preparation for the Sudan multi-donor trust fund in the education and water and sanitation sectors.

57. Use of International Development Association (IDA) funds is also expanding, particularly in post-conflict countries. Under an agreement with the Government of Sierra Leone and UNICEF signed in October 2004, IDA grant funding for a teacher training project will help to scale up a UNICEF-initiated project. An agreement being discussed with the Government of the Democratic Republic of Congo would use IDA grant funding for an HIV/AIDS project focusing on support to AIDS orphans and vulnerable children and prevention of mother-to-child transmission as part of the World Bank's Multi-Country HIV/AIDS Program for Africa.

58. In addition to collaboration in particular substantive areas, UNICEF – as an active member of UNDG – works with the World Bank in supporting and promoting the harmonization and alignment initiatives sponsored by the OECD/DAC. UNICEF participated in regional meetings which fed into the Paris High-Level Forum, and was also part of a UNDG team in a subregional workshop in Uganda, sponsored by the World Bank, the African Development Bank, OECD/DAC and UNDP on application of the Paris Declaration at country level.

Funds transfers

59. In 2004, UNICEF and the World Bank confirmed agreement on issues relating to financial management of funds transferred to UNICEF from the World Bank. This enabled a number of funding

agreements to be signed, with the World Bank supporting UNICEF work in areas such as those discussed above.

III. Follow-up to international conferences

60. UNICEF is collaborating with United Nations partners in the system-wide follow-up to the Millennium Declaration, to the 2005 World Summit and to other recent international conferences and General Assembly special sessions.

61. The reaffirmation of the Millennium Declaration by the 2005 World Summit places the Millennium Development Goals at the forefront of the development agenda. For UNICEF, achievement of the Goals is the central to the agenda for children. The UNICEF MTSP for 2006-2009 places the core objective of UNICEF squarely within the context of the national and international implementation of the Millennium Summit Declaration and pursuit of the Millennium Development Goals.

62. UNICEF plays a leading role in monitoring progress towards the Goals, particularly through global reporting; leading inter-agency monitoring and evaluation working groups; supporting national data collection through MICS; maintaining global databases; and preparing joint estimates on indicators.

63. UNICEF contributed strongly to the analysis underlying a 2005 United Nations report on progress toward the Millennium Development Goals. In preparation for the 2005 World Summit, UNICEF also supported the preparation of the Secretary General's report, "In Larger Freedom: Towards Development, Security and Human Rights for All" (A/59/2005), particularly in reporting on Goal-related targets for poverty (underweight prevalence), child mortality, immunization, maternal health, water and sanitation, malaria and HIV/AIDS. In addition, UNICEF, together with other agencies, is preparing a number of other more detailed global progress reports on specific Goals, including the *World Malaria Report 2005* and *Meeting the MDG Drinking Water and Sanitation Target: a Mid-Term Assessment of Progress* (both prepared jointly with WHO), and *Progress for Children* reports on child mortality, girls' education and immunization.

64. UNICEF, together with WHO, has been identified as the lead agency for annual reporting in the Secretary-General's progress reports for all of the health-related Goals. These include child mortality, malaria, water and sanitation, maternal health, HIV/AIDS and child malnutrition.

65. UNICEF has led various inter-agency monitoring and evaluation working groups around monitoring of the Goals. The primary purpose of these groups is to harmonize monitoring and evaluation work for the Goals within the United Nations system, to address specific technical and measurement issues and build monitoring capacities at country level. UNICEF currently leads inter-agency groups on child mortality, malaria, water and sanitation, HIV/AIDS and immunization.

66. UNICEF supports data collection through MICS, which are a primary data source for monitoring indicators for the Goals. The MICS, which can generate 22 of 53 indicators, will be conducted in approximately 50 countries during 2005 and 2006.

67. UNICEF participated in a review of indicators for the Goals in October 2005 to make any necessary changes to existing indicators and, where necessary, add additional ones. This process, coordinated by the United Nations Statistics Division, has resulted in a revised set of indicators.

68. UNICEF, UNFPA and UNIFEM have agreed to prepare a joint report for the next United Nations entities' closed meeting with the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women at its thirty-fourth session in January 2006. UNICEF will focus on strengthening the assessment of the situation of the girl child and recommendations on how to address the eventual gaps in reporting on girls.

Follow-up to the General Assembly special session on children, 2002

Progress to date

69. Action to implement the goals of "A world fit for children", the Special Session's Declaration and Plan of Action, are in full harmony with the Millennium Declaration and Millennium Development Goals, which directly address and affect the rights of children. The building of a world fit for children would make a major contribution to meeting the Goals.

70. Throughout all regions, coalitions and networks of religious leaders, child rights groups, NGOs, women's organizations, professional associations and United Nations and other organizations continue to follow up to the special session's goals, helping to keep them high on the political agenda and contributing to their implementation. The Global Movement for Children, of which UNICEF is a member, organized the *Lesson for Life* initiative, which mobilized 4 million children and adults in 67 countries to discuss HIV/AIDS and its impact on children on the occasion of World AIDS Day 2004. Other follow up to the session during 2005 included the fourth Regional Meeting of NGO Coalitions in Europe focusing on children's rights; the Sixth Ibero-American Ministerial Meeting on Children and Adolescents, which focused on the protection of children from violence and other forms of exploitation; and the Seventh East Asia and Pacific Ministerial Consultation on Children. The Arab Parliamentarian Union hosted the First Arab Parliamentarian Conference on Child Protection in November 2004, with the collaboration of the Inter-Parliamentary Union and UNICEF.

71. The preparation of national plans of action for children, completed or underway in 86 countries since the special session is a key element of follow-up to the session. These national plans of action for children address in specific terms the four areas of the session's Plan of Action. Other national plans refer to measures already undertaken by Governments to track the realization of the goals, including improvement of statistical systems and assessment of plan implementation.

72. UNICEF continues its session-mandated role to monitor and disseminate information on the Plan of Action. At the field and at the global level, many other agencies concerned with children have reaffirmed the leadership role of UNICEF in monitoring and in implementing programmes for children.

Strengths and weaknesses in the follow-up to the special session on children

73. Civil society is frequently involved in the preparation of national plans of action, but less so in implementation, monitoring and review. The preparation of PRSs and national development plans have often involved trade unions, parliamentarians and the private sector, while the national plans of action for children have more often involved children and young people themselves, through task forces, polls or children's parliaments. UNICEF continues to expand its partnerships with civil society, Governments and with the private sector on behalf of children.

74. The national plans of action for children tend to address the needs of disadvantaged children more explicitly than is done in other instruments. Meanwhile, decentralization reforms in many countries are also providing opportunities for supporting children at subnational levels. The process of developing child-related goals at provincial and municipal levels has been completed in several countries, based on local assessments and participatory planning. The generation of data to support programmes specifically oriented to disadvantaged families and children remains a challenge.

75. The strong focus of the goals of the Millennium Declaration on children has created a positive synergy with the goals of "A world fit for children" and convergence of national planning processes around a common set of goals. Because the Millennium Development Goals focus on children, issues relating to children are now high on the international agenda.

76. A number of countries are mobilizing additional resources and protecting expenditures for the four areas identified by the special session's Plan of Action. PRSs and national development plans have been useful instruments in mobilizing resources. As few of the national plans of action developed specifically for children have well-developed budget information, efforts are needed to strengthen the link between these plans and national budgets.

77. The majority of the national plans of action for children refer to the Convention on the Rights of the Child or to the Concluding Observations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child on the respective country report. Other human rights instruments, such as ILO Conventions 138 and 182 and the two Optional Protocols to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, are also increasingly recognized as part of the framework for national plans of action. Almost all the recent national plans of action on children foresee the need to review national legislation in relation to the provisions of the Convention, and PRSs are increasingly recognizing elements of the Convention as well. UNICEF particularly supports national plans as a means by which to reiterate pursuit of the Millennium Development Goals.

Strengthening of monitoring mechanisms for child goals

78. Achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and other targets for children will be impossible without a commitment to accountability and adequate monitoring mechanisms. "A world fit for children" emphasizes the importance of monitoring progress towards the adopted goals. Many countries which are implementing PRSs or national development plans have established quite rigorous monitoring mechanisms, often coordinated by the central finance or planning ministry. The mechanisms in the national plans of action for children are more variable.

79. Efforts to implement the goals of the special session, reinforced by the broad international commitment to the Millennium Development Goals, have led to improvement of national monitoring systems. Many countries have moved towards unified data collection and monitoring systems for these goals. United Nations agencies and other partners continue to collaborate in supporting a consolidated system of data collection and monitoring of the Goals as well as for reporting to the Committee on the Rights of the Child. *DevInfo*, adopted by 61 countries, is one major contribution.

80. Insufficiently clear targets for child protection continue to pose the challenge of ensuring that this priority area is appropriately considered in macro-level plans, including in PRSs. Such plans should take account of the ways in which the protection of children affects the fulfilment of human rights, and that an insufficient focus on addressing problems such as child trafficking, child labour and violence against children is likely to significantly hinder national development progress. UNICEF has increased its advocacy on this issue, together with other members of the UNCT.

81. UNICEF and other agencies are supporting a new round of MICS that will provide the largest single source of data for reporting on progress towards the Millennial Goals and the goals of "A world fit for children". Comparable child-related data will also be produced by demographic and health surveys. Nearly 90 countries are engaged in household surveys during 2005 and early 2006. This will provide a rich data base for reporting to the commemorative plenary meeting on the special session on children to be held by the General Assembly in 2007. It will also assist in closing some of the major gaps in information in areas such as child protection.

82. The more inclusive processes which have been used in the initial follow-up to the special session on children have resulted in a greater sense of ownership by civil society organizations. High priority is being given to further developing partnerships with civil society, including children and young people, as a key part of the effort to realize results for children.

83. At the international level, the Committee on the Rights of the Child has the potential to promote a closer linkage between follow-up to the special session, the Millennium Development Goals and State Party reports to the Committee. The Committee's concluding observations on these reports should be used to maintain government and public mobilization around the goals for children. The United Nations system should continue to assist Member States in their follow-up to these observations where required.

84. Building on the efforts already made by Governments, regular reporting to the public on progress towards the goals of the Millennium Summit and of "A world fit for children" should be ensured as an important means of social mobilization for development, as well as for strengthened accountability. In addition, civil society and community groups are being assisted to generate information in specific areas, such as on the protection and care of children orphaned due to AIDS, a key element of the "Unite for Children, Unite Against AIDS" campaign.

85. With just 10 years to achieve the Millennium Development Goals and progress toward them uneven, UNICEF continues to support partnerships, programmes and approaches – such as integration of service delivery – that focus on the Goals. Accomplishing individual Goals is widely viewed as a "force multiplier" that will make the other Goals more attainable.